

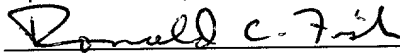
PATENT

ABSTRACT

A system for modeling a distribution system to sell resources or license resources such as software on a usage basis, and for storing usage data or sales data reported from licensees and distributors and prepare reports or invoices therefrom. The system uses a centralized server which maintains a data structure which has data entries to: model entities such as vendors, licensees and distributors in the distribution system; record license terms; memorialize the existence of licenses; and store usage data for each resource by each licensee. This usage data is reported by agent programs on the computers of licensees. The server is programmed to provide an interface so remote users can access their data and other data to which access privileges exist and to receive uploaded usage data from the agent programs on the licensee computers. The server is also programmed to convert usage data to metric data using programmable conversion formulas and to convert metrics to central service units at a higher level of abstraction also using programmable conversion formulas.

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